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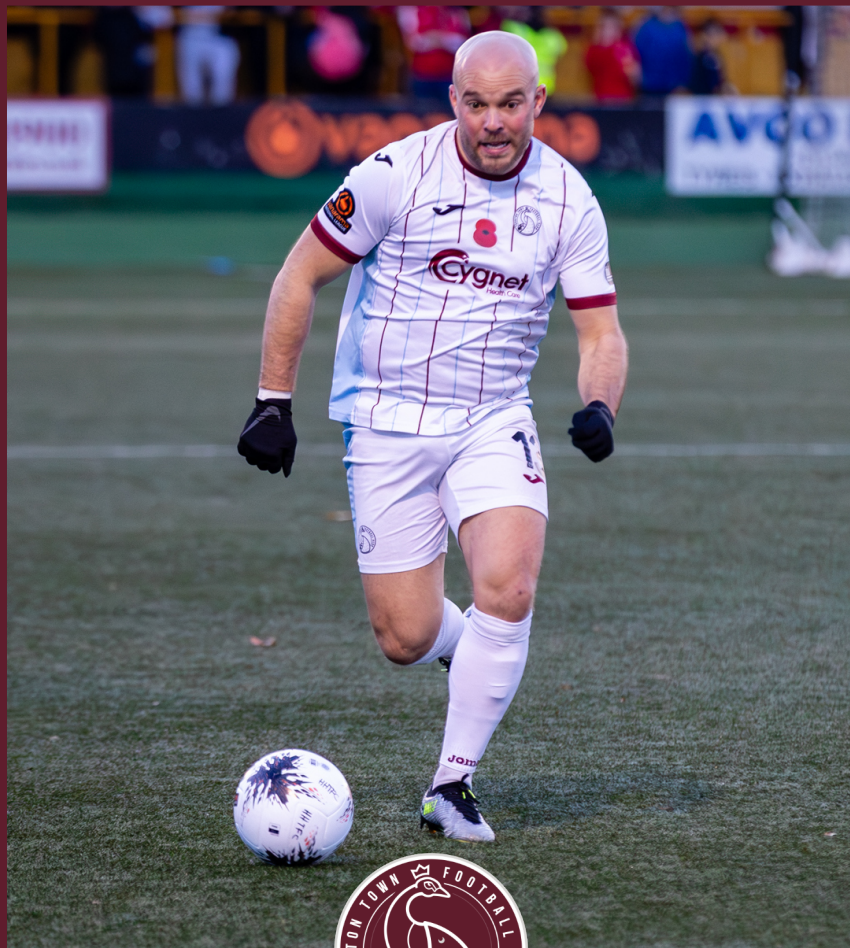
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THE OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME OF TAUNTON TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB

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TAUNTON TOWN V FARNBOROUGH

SATURDAY 9 DECEMBER 2023 | KICK-OFF 3:00PM

TAUNTON TOWN V WESTON-SUPER-MARE

TUESDAY 12 DECEMBER 2023 | KICK-OFF 7:45PM





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CONTACT DETAILS

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Coach: Steve Phillips

Goalkeeping Coach: Lloyd Irish

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Club Photographers: Debbie Gould, Darren Harris

Videographer: Alex Anderson

Peacocks Radio: Rich Wilcox-Smith, Jon Reed



THE GAFFER

Welcome to the Somerset Campervan Co Stadium finally for our next two home fixtures as we host Farnborough and Weston-super-Mare. My welcome extends to the officials, management, players and supporters joining us and also to the match officials.

Unfortunately another game (vs Slough Town) fell to the recent weather with our pitch becoming waterlogged on Monday following some heavy rainfall which resulted in 9 inches of water laying on the playing surface.

This postponement means an additional fixture to squeeze in to what will become a very busy stretch of games and we will require every member of the squad.

It's time to start collecting some points in these games we have in hand to start moving up the table.

We would like to thank you for your continued unwavering support throughout and please ensure you are in full voice for these important league matches.

Up The Peacocks!!

Rob

Rob Dray
Head of Football, Taunton Town FC

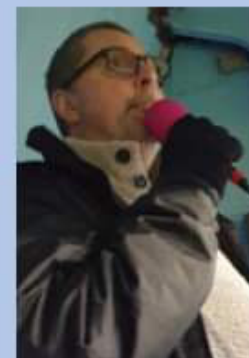


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THE AWAY END



FARNBOROUGH

Farnborough Football Club is the re-birth of Farnborough Town FC that was liquidated on 25 July 2007.

Farnborough Football Club started life in season 2007/08 in the Southern League Division One South & West and it was a season that turned to glory as the club won the Championship and with it promotion to the Southern League Premier Division. The League title was secured under manager Andy Clement with 89 points and an impressive 120 goals being scored in the process that underlined a fantastic achievement for the club's new beginnings.

Despite the success, the club and Andy Clement mutually agreed that due to the extra demands in the next step up a change of manager would be made and former Crawley Town and Basingstoke Town manager Francis Vines took up the reigns in the summer of 2008, assisted by former Reading and Basingstoke Town midfielder Steve Richardson.

Farnborough's Cherrywood Road ground had a large face-lift and investment was being put into a number of areas under the leadership of former Chairman Simon Hollis and the Board of Directors.

Boro almost made it back-to-back promotions, just missing out in the BGB Southern Premier play-off final, losing 1-0 to Gloucester City. That came after Vines' men had led the way for six months of the campaign, before losing the title to Corby Town in the final game of the season.

In the summer of 2009, it was announced that

Vines would not remain as manager, with Steve King replacing him as first team boss. Justin Skinner also arrived as assistant manager, with both signing full-time deals. Season 2009-10 saw Farnborough go onto win the Southern League and with it promotion to the Blue Square South.

Season 2010-11 saw 'Boro for the second time in their short history follow up a Championship with a second place finish, and after accounting for Woking in a two legged play-off semi-final, fell again at the last hurdle, Ebbsfleet United winning promotion to the Blue Square Premier in front of a record Rushmoor Community Stadium crowd exceeding 4,000.

Steve King left the club in May 2011, replaced by former Hayes & Yeading manager Garry Haylock, and the club declared that it was transferring to full time status.

Following a poor run of results, Haylock's tenure as manager came to an end in November 2011, and his replacement came in the guise of Chertsey Town manager Spencer Day, and a return to part time football. With the change of manager came an upturn of fortunes, and a run of six successive league wins spanning January through March pulled Boro away from the danger zone, although a five point deduction imposed by the Football Conference took the club back into trouble, but Blue Square South football was secured on the penultimate Saturday with a solitary goal victory over Havant & Waterlooville.

In 2012/13 the club enjoyed a relatively successful season on the pitch, playing a good

brand of football, resulting in a 14th place finish.

Historical financial debt problems inevitably left the manager with no choice but to implement a reduced player budget in season 2014/15. The consequences of this long term handicap finally came home to roost when Boro finished 20th in the Vanarama Conference South suffering relegation to the Isthmian Premier League, and a further relegation the following season. A re-defining of the league's geographical borders also resulted in a sideways move to the Southern League.

2016/17 season got off to a good start, with Farnborough briefly leading the charge before dropping back to the second position behind Royston Town. A season long chase ensued, waiting for Royston to slip up, a slip that never materialised, and the Boro had to settle for second place and home draw in the playoffs. The team stayed stable throughout the season, based on the successful late season squad from the previous year with a few local favourites in the guise of Nic Ciardini, Josh Huggins and Perry Coles added. The start of the season saw us graced by the presence of former Norwich/Reading/Bristol Rovers star, Jamie Cureton, before he departed for higher level football at Eastleigh. On the coaching side, long time assistant coach, Leigh Dynan, left to pursue a manager's role at Whyteleafe, but Spencer wasted no time in bringing in Jon Reed whose knowledge of the Southern league proved to be invaluable.

Onto the playoff final, and in front of 1000 plus Boro supporters, the Yellows secured a nervous, but comfortable 2-0 victory over Barton Rovers to signify their return to the Southern Premier League.

An opening day loss to a fancied Poole Town was one of several lows, which included 0-7 and 0-5 home defeats to Tiverton and Wealdstone, the latter sending Boro crashing out of the FA cup. The passing of club stalwart, Chris Cook who lost his fight with cancer.

In contrast, several highs also, 4-0 home victories against Taunton, Yate and Hendon, and an impressive 1-3 away victory at Weston-super-Mare. The high flying Boro squad making their way to Truro, LHR to NQY return!

Season 2021/22 started well. Spencer assembled an exciting squad with many

promising signings, most notable Sam Deering and Ricky Holmes making the weekly journey from Essex to spearhead the Boro challenge.

Despite an opening day draw at home to Walton Casuals, Farnborough followed up with impressive victories away to Chesham and Poole and at home to Hendon. A small stutter was soon forgotten by an 11 match run of victories in all competitions which saw the Yellows take a healthy lead at the head of the division. Top at Christmas, followed up with a 9 game unbeaten run in January emphasised the desire of this squad to gain promotion, although with chasers, Hayes and Yeading United, falling behind in fixtures, the lead was never mathematically safe.

Despite the "small" distraction of a Hampshire Cup run ending in victory in the Final at Eastleigh, a battle ensued in the league, and as Hayes played out each game in hand, the chase for the title became tighter and tighter. A draw between the two teams in March added to the tension with still no clear winner. Then all of a sudden, there was a third horse in the race. A revitalised Taunton Town came on a fantastic run which would see them hurdle both of the long term leaders, and the race went down to the last game of the season, with any one of the three able to claim the title. At the final whistle, Taunton were champions, Hayes 2nd and Farnborough in a slightly disappointing third.

On to the playoffs, with Farnborough earning a home fixture against Metropolitan Police, a team that had solidly been top 4 all season.

A nail-bitingly close match ensued, with the police taking an 85th minute lead, only for Boro to get an injury time equaliser, and an extra time winner. So a showdown against our season long rivals, Hayes and Yeading was set, and what a day it turned out to be. A master game plan to thwart the effectiveness of the attack minded Hayes team was to eventually bare fruit, despite going a goal down early on. A first half injury time equaliser by club favourite Reggie Young, and a late winner by Sam Deering saw the Boro celebrating at the final whistle, and finally, promotion back to step 2, the National League South!



TWO TO WATCH



MICHAEL FOLIVI

Having started out his career at Watford, Michael took on loan spells with Coventry City, Boreham Wood and AFC Wimbledon (twice) throughout the following years, before signing for League Two Colchester United in the 2020/21 season. Injury resulted in Folivi departing Colchester City for National League South Chelmsford City in February 2023, where the 25- year-old netted 6 goals in 14 appearances for The Clarets... including two against Boro, who he signed for in July 2023.



REGGIE YOUNG

Reggie is currently in his third spell at the Club having returned ahead of the 2021/22 season from National League South outfit Hemel Hempstead Town, where he bagged 7 assists in a 2020/21 season cut short. Comfortable on the left and right, Young is fast becoming a firm club favourite and scored the vital equaliser in the play off final last season.

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THIS SEASON AT A GLANCE



PLAYED **17**

WON **6**

DRAWN **7**

LOST **4**

+/- **0**

POINTS **25**

LGE POS **15TH**

HOME POINTS% **68%**



21 PLAYED

7 WON

8 DRAWN

6 LOST

+3 +/-

29 POINTS

11TH LGE POS

24% AWAY POINTS%



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SCAN ME

THE TEAMS

VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH | SATURDAY 9 DECEMBER 2023 | KICK-OFF 3:00PM



V



HEAD OF FOOTBALL: ROB DRAY

- DAN LAVERCOMBE (GK) 1
- JAY FOULSTON 3
- NICK GRIMES 4
- DAN BALL 5
- AUSTEN BOOTH 6
- OLLIE CHAMBERLAIN 7
- LLOYD JAMES 8
- NAT JARVIS 9
- NICK MCCOOTIE 10
- JOE GUEST 11
- RABBY TABU MINZAMBA 12
- ROSS STEARN 13
- PHIL MENDONCA 15
- ZAC SMITH 16
- CAMERON EVANS 17
- MARCUS DAY 18
- CALLUM DOLMAN 19
- DAVE SIMS-BURGESS 20
- LLOYD IRISH (GK) 21
- DYLAN MORGAN 22
- MALACHI LINTON 27
- LEE LUCAS 31
- EVANDER GRUBB 32



MATCH OFFICIALS

REFEREE:
CONSTANTINE HATZIDAKIS

ASSISTANT REFEREE:
ANDREW GLANVILLE

ASSISTANT REFEREE:
AIDEN MADDEN

MANAGER: SPENCER DAY

- 1 JACK TURNER
- 2 JACK BALL
- 3 JORDAN NORVILLE-WILLIAMS
- 4 CJ FEARN
- 5 OLLIE ROBINSON
- 6 JOE PARTINGTON
- 7 ADAM MEKKI
- 8 JADEN PEREZ
- 9 ALFIE PAVEY
- 10 MICHAEL FOLIVI
- 11 REGGIE YOUNG
- 12 ADAM PAYCE
- 19 RYAN UPWARD
- 21 TAYLOR MALONEY
- 26 RICKY HOLMES
- 32 ALFIE SAUNDERS
- 35 SID NELSON

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DAVE WEBSTER

View from the stands

TAUNTON TOWN 1 WORTHING 1
Vanarama National League South



The thing about football, and indeed everything else in every walk of life, is we all see things differently. We all have our own opinions, which not all will agree with...That's life!

On arrival at Tauntons ground, the words "Hat Trick" emblazoned on the roof of the clubhouse, reminded me instantly of this fixture from last season, when Ross Stearn scored an hat-trick! Alas, there was no Ross in the starting 11. This was to be a very tense and at times frustrating encounter, with, for much of the game Taunton playing very well, without really troubling Rees in the Worthing goal.

That was largely down to the Worthing defence, who it has to be said were outstanding, thwarting so many of our attacks, I lost count of the shots Taunton had that were blocked by the oppositions rear-guard. It was a very even first half, with neither keeper having to make a save of note. Our 2 best chances came in a 3 minute period! First Zac had a shot hit low and hard, that was put out for a corner, then Guesty had a go from just yards out that went wide of the post by inches. And that was that, as we went in at half time with the score at 0-0, bringing Taunton up to 450 minutes of league football without a goal!!!

Up to this point the referee had been pretty much insignificant, with having so little to deal with. This was all to change in the 2nd half, with many of his decisions quite bewildering. A half that saw Taunton denied 2, even 3 realistic penalty claims. Both teams came out with much emphasis on not conceding rather than scoring, it was a game that appeared to have 0-0 all over it. With less than 20 minutes remaining, against the run of play, Worthing scored. This coming almost immediately after Rob had brought on Stearn and McCootie for Jarvis and Linton. The goal hit us like a punch to the kidney's. McCootie came so close with the keeper beaten, his header was headed off the line.

Our saviour came in the form of Dylan Morgan. Do we like this fella? You bet we do! With the game fizzling out to a 0-1 defeat, Morgan hit a beauty,

granted it was deflected, who cares? 1-1. With the board showing 5 minutes of added on time to be played, we sensed victory, as the onslaught hit new levels. The pressure was now showing on the put upon Worthing defence, who at last began to show serious signs of crumbling.

With the final minutes ticking down, a Taunton throw-in was thrown short, but before the ball could be launched into the Worthing box, the ref blew his whistle to end the game. How ever this is sugar-coated, it was officialdom at its worse. Surely he should have waited until a dead ball situation!!!

This infuriated the Taunton fans no end. Now I don't know what activated the fracas at the end, which appeared to involve both dug outs and every player on the field, but it soured what was a very hard fought game of football.

Including FA Cup, FA Trophy and Somerset Cup games, this was our 10th draw in 24 games! By anyone's standards that is a lot of drawn games! Draws do not guarantee survival. Which has to be our priority. We need to get back to winning ways...Pronto. Next Saturday could see us snatch our first double of the season when we play at Eastbourne. Ironically, the last club we beat in a league game!

I personally saw a lot of pluses from this Worthing game, there were some terrific individual performances, notably Joe Guest who quite honestly did not put a foot wrong. And most of all, the league goal drought is finally over. Thank you for that "Shoot on sight" Dyl. A 1-1 draw against a very good Worthing team, that be sure, will be hovering around the play off places is most definitely not to be sniffed at.

On a finishing note, our 2-2 draw [After 90 mins] verses Welling on Tues, was not so bad after all, taking into account what they did to runaway league leaders Yeovil yesterday. Oh dear, my heart is breaking, now wheres my kleenex. Onwards to next Saturday. UTP.

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THE AWAY END



WESTON-SUPER-MARE

Weston-super-Mare A.F.C. was formed in 1887. The team's first record of a competitive match being against near-neighbours Clevedon Town in a "Medal Competition" organised by the Somerset FA. In 1900, they joined Division two of the Western Football League but left after two years. In 1910, they rejoined this league and played there until World War I.

Between the wars, the club played in the local Bristol and District Football League and then the Somerset County League but the club disbanded upon the outbreak of hostilities in 1939. The club reformed in 1948 and immediately rejoined the Western League, initially in Division Two. At this time the team played at the Great Ground in Locking Road, where initially there was no cover for spectators and the players had to change in a marquee. A season after the club joined rejoined the Western league they made their debut in the FA Cup in the 1949–50 season losing to Gloucester City in the preliminary qualifying round. The team remained in the Second Division until the league consolidated to a single division in 1960. During this time they moved to the Langford Road Ground. In 1976, they were placed into the Western League Premier Division upon the creation of a second tier, meaning that by their centenary in 1987 they had never been promoted or relegated in their history.

In early 1986, Paul Bliss was approached by Weston-super-Mare and he was named as the club's chairman roughly six months later. In 1989, John Ellener was appointed manager and led the club to the Western League championship in 1991–92 and with it promotion to the Southern League Midland Division. They remained at this level, playing successively in the Midland, Southern, Midland (again) and Western

Divisions due to the Southern League's regular reorganisations, until 2002–03 when they finished in second place and were promoted to the Premier Division, clinching promotion with a win away to rivals Clevedon Town. In their first Premier Division season they finished in 10th place, enough to clinch a place in the newly formed Conference South.

The club's most successful FA Cup run came in the 2003–04 season, when the Seagulls reached the second round. After defeating Dorchester Town, Chesham United (via a replay) and Welling United in the qualifying rounds, Weston secured a 1–0 away win against Farnborough Town to progress from the first round. They were awarded with an away tie against Third Division side, Northampton Town where they were eventually beaten 4–1. In the same season, Weston would equal their best performance in the FA Trophy, reaching the Fourth Round of the competition.

In the 2006–07 season of the Conference South, the club finished in 20th position and were set to be relegated. However, Farnborough Town were relegated due to going into liquidation and Hayes and Yeading merged to form Hayes & Yeading United, leaving the Conference South one team short, earning a reprieve for Weston. The 2007–08 season ended in similar fashion for Weston. A 20th-place finish meant the club was eligible for relegation, only to be spared by the enforced demotion of Cambridge City, who failed a ground inspection. The 2009–10 campaign again saw the club finish in the relegation zone again when they finished 21st, however as before the club was saved by the FA, this time when Salisbury City were demoted twice to the Southern league.

The 2010–11 season saw the club win the Somerset Premier Cup for the first time, when they defeated Yeovil Town in the final. The club retained the cup the following season (2011–12) when they beat local rivals Clevedon Town 2–1.

In 2012–13, the club finished the season with their highest ever placing in the Conference South in 7th place with 67 points and narrowly missing out on a place in the playoffs. The 2014–15 season brought a relatively successful cup campaign as the Seagulls won three qualifying matches in the FA Cup and reached the First Round Proper of the FA Cup, where they lost 4–1 at home to Doncaster Rovers in front of a record attendance of 2,949.

After a string of poor results, Micky Bell was replaced by Director of Football, Ryan Northmore at the end of November 2014 with the Seagulls at the bottom of the table. Northmore took the team on a string of unbeaten games, taking them to promotion challenging form. Unfortunately this didn't continue and after defeating Bath City at home 4–1 in a rearranged fixture the rejuvenated Seagulls didn't win another league game, which saw them finish 17th.

The 2015–16 season saw the side struggle to gain a win throughout August in the League, winning just 1 point from 18, with that point coming at home in the Somerset Derby against Bath City.

Toward the end of November, Ryan Northmore's troops managed to pull themselves up to 2nd in the league's form table by going 10 games unbeaten in the Nation League South from 21 November until 16 February. It came to an end when Weston couldn't maintain the run, eventually losing 2–0 to Hayes & Yeading at the Woodspring.

The side momentarily lost form with losses coming against St. Albans and Wealdstone however, over the Easter weekend, the side bagged an important 3 points over Ebbsfleet thanks to Captain Dayle Grubb's impressive strikes.

This was followed by a tough defeat to relegation rivals Bath City, with Scott Wilson firing in during the 91st minute, but Bath hit back with a penalty in the 92nd minute and the

94th minute.

During the last month of the season, the Seagulls once again turned on the style and ended the season with 6 unbeaten games from 7, with Scott Wilson and Dayle Grubb netting in a 2–0 win over Maidstone to spark manic celebrations from the home fans at The Woodspring knowing that the Seagulls had avoided relegation.

With the season ending in a party atmosphere in Havant on 30 April, with fan favourite Scott Wilson sliding home at the far post to ultimately send Havant down and keep Margate down.

The club revealed a new crest after the end of the 2015–16 season. Manager Ryan Northmore was sacked by the club on 18 September 2016 after a run of seven league losses and an FA Cup exit to North Leigh. Northmore was replaced by former Weston-super-Mare player and Forest Green Rovers caretaker manager Scott Bartlett on 3 October 2016. Bartlett left the club at the end of the 2016–17 season after having led the Seagulls to 15th in the National League South. Former player Marc McGregor was his replacement for the new season.

McGregor's first season in charge saw the club finish in a credible 12th place with McGregor being named Manager of the Month for November. The 2018–19 season saw the club struggle for form, only picking up their first league win three months into the season with their first home league win coming nearly three months later. McGregor's time in charge came to an end in March 2019 with the club ultimately suffering the first relegation in their 137-year history.

The 2021–22 season saw Weston finish the season in fifth place, qualifying for the end of season playoffs but the Seagulls lost their semi-final 2–1 against Hayes and Yeading United to confirm their continued participation in the Southern League.

The 2022–23 season saw Weston immediately challenging at the top of the table, spending much of the season battling with Truro City for the top spot. Weston were crowned champions following an emphatic 4–1 win against Hendon securing a return to the National League South after four years.



TWO TO WATCH



REUBEN REID

One of our more experienced players, 'Reidy' has played for Plymouth Argyle, Kidderminster Harriers, Rochdale, Torquay United, Wycombe Wanderers, Brentford, Rotherham United, West Bromwich Albion, Peterborough United, Walsall, Rotherham United, West Bromwich Albion, Oldham Athletic, Yeovil Town, Exeter City, Forest Green Rovers and Cheltenham Town. He signed for Weston in 2022.



JORDAN BASTIN

Jordan began his career in the Exeter City and Plymouth Argyle ranks before moving to Tiverton Town's Reserves. A two-year spell with Elmore AFC, including netting over 70 goals, saw him return to Tiverton in 2019 before arriving at The Seagulls in 2021.

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THIS SEASON AT A GLANCE



PLAYED **17**

WON **6**

DRAWN **7**

LOST **4**

+/- **0**

POINTS **25**

LGE POS **15TH**

HOME POINTS% **68%**



PLAYED **20**

WON **9**

DRAWN **3**

LOST **8**

+/- **-1**

POINTS **30**

LGE POS **11TH**

AWAY POINTS% **50%**

THE TEAMS

VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH | TUESDAY 12 DECEMBER 2023 | KICK-OFF 7:45PM



V



HEAD OF FOOTBALL: ROB DRAY

DAN LAVERCOMBE (GK)	1	○
JAY FOULSTON	3	○
NICK GRIMES	4	○
DAN BALL	5	○
AUSTEN BOOTH	6	○
OLLIE CHAMBERLAIN	7	○
LLOYD JAMES	8	○
NAT JARVIS	9	○
NICK MCCOOTIE	10	○
JOE GUEST	11	○
RABBY TABU MINZAMBA	12	○
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PHIL MENDONCA	15	○
ZAC SMITH	16	○
CAMERON EVANS	17	○
MARCUS DAY	18	○
CALLUM DOLMAN	19	○
DAVE SIMS-BURGESS	20	○
LLOYD IRISH (GK)	21	○
DYLAN MORGAN	22	○
MALACHI LINTON	27	○
LEE LUCAS	31	○
EVANDER GRUBB	32	○



MATCH OFFICIALS

REFEREE:
PHILLIP EDDIE

ASSISTANT REFEREE:
DANIEL SPYER

ASSISTANT REFEREE:
GRAHAM PEARCE

MANAGER: SCOTT BARTLETT

○ MAX HARRIS (GK)
○ LUKE PURNELL (GK)
○ SAM AVERY
○ LLOYD HUMPHRIES
○ JASON POPE
○ KEIRAN THOMAS
○ JORDAN BASTIN
○ JAMES DODD
○ OPI EDWARDS
○ DAYLE GRUBB
○ JACOB JAGGER-CANE
○ REX MANNINGS
○ JAMES MORTON
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Our front page headline in The NLP on Sunday read "Sweet 16", depicting the surprise number of upsets in the FA Trophy that day.

In all, no fewer than 26 of the 48 National League North and South teams exited Non-League's primary cup competition last Saturday, almost two-thirds of these by lower league opposition.

Monday's third round draw included four Step 4 clubs who had made their way to the last 64, including City of Liverpool and Nantwich Town, who flew the flag for NPL Division One West with victory over National League North pair Buxton and Chester respectively.

Elsewhere, NPL Midlands side Walsall Wood were triumphant at Hemel Hempstead Town, while Southern League Frome Town dumped out Worthing on penalties.

And Isthmian South East Hythe Town rounded off a day of shocks by dumping out Kent rivals Tonbridge Angels.

But, look back at the records though and you'll see that statistics like this are actually not as unusual as you'd think for this stage of the FA Trophy.

For years; many saw the Trophy as a drain on an already hectic schedule for little

financial reward, hence why it ranked low on a top-flight manager's pre-season priority list.

Measures have been put in place to help balance this out, such as scrapping two-legged semi-finals in recent seasons, but it appears the stigma that has plagued the competition over the years remains.

So, my question is, with its overall prestige and, of course, the carrot of the ultimate reward in football – a historic day out under the Wembley arch – does the FA Trophy deserve a little more love from boards and managers alike?

As far as the boards are concerned, traditionally, third round weekend is one of the most underwhelming on the football calendar; played on the final Saturday before Christmas and to significantly reduced attendances given that Trophy ties are not often included as part of regular season ticket packages.

This year's FA Trophy winners will pocket a £60,000 purse – not to be sniffed at, of course, but still a fraction of what can be earned for a blockbuster FA Cup tie, as enjoyed by the likes of Sheppey United, Horsham and Cray Valley PM already this year.

For managers either battling for honours at the top end of the National League for

looking to escape the lower reaches, any further strain on an already hectic league schedule is never going to be popular.

This may well be the reason why clubs from the second and even third tiers of Non-League football have historically fared so well.

In the last decade alone, North Ferriby (2014-15), Brackley Town (2017-18) and Hornchurch (2020-21) have lifted the trophy while playing outside the top-flight, while Gosport Borough (2013-14), Concord Rangers (2019-20) and Hereford (2020-21) were losing finalists.

Indeed, you have to go back to 1993 to the last time a Conference and FA Trophy double was completed when Wycombe Wanderers doubled up under Martin O'Neill.

Wealdstone (1984-85) and Colchester United (1991-92) are the only other double winners, although, in recent years, Cambridge United (2013-14) and York City (2016-17) have come mighty close to joining them having won the Trophy and promotion to the Football League through the play-offs.

Trio Stevenage Borough (2009-10), Grimsby Town (2015-16) and Leyton Orient (2018-19) all won promotion while losing the final showcase at Wembley, while Wrexham did things the other way round in 2012-13, winning the FA Trophy in March but then losing the play-off promotion final to Newport County two months later.

And in 2019-20, Harrogate Town became the only EFL club to lift the Trophy when they were returned from the Covid hiatus in September 2020 to see off a Concord Rangers side from two leagues below by the solitary goal.

It all shows that, despite requiring an almighty effort, it IS possible to combine a fifth tier title challenge with an FA Trophy run, although very few will boast the strength in depth afforded by Lincoln City bosses Danny and Nicky Cowley in 2016-17, who could afford to field an entire second string side for the FA Trophy, dubbed the Lincoln Lizards, and went all the way to the semi-finals where they lost to York who, coincidentally, were relegated that season.

Current holders FC Halifax Town and their National League rivals begin their 2023-24 FA Trophy assault in a fortnight's time with history once again in the making.

The Wembley dream awaits two of the final 64 on Non-League Finals Day next May – a day just as special as this famous old competition itself.



OFFICIAL MATCH REPORT

TAUNTON TOWN I WORTHING I

25.11.2023 | VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH | ATT: 765

Had a point been offered at 3.00pm given recent results and against an in-form side eyeing at least a play-off place come April, many in the Peacock fold may have snapped the proverbial hand off but there was undoubtedly a sense at the final whistle that any acceptance of a point before kick-off may have been premature. Despite Town displaying more attacking impetus and being the better side on the day though, Worthing keeper Roco Rees was not really stretched due in no small part to the efficient visiting defence while the solid Peacocks' backline at the other end gave little away to the Sussex outfit. Hardly surprising then that clear chances were not overly plentiful, and honours finished even.

Lee Lucas and captain Nick Grimes stepped back into the starting line-up after missing the midweek Trophy game at Welling while Malachi Linton replaced Nick McCootie up top. A crisp autumnal afternoon greeted the teams onto the pitch with the hosts looking to gain their first league win in six outings, but it was the visitors who saw most of the early ball, with Ollie Pearce connecting with a Greg Luer cross to steer well wide. The home side gradually settled as they looked for a way through. A Lucas pass attempted to play Jay Foulston in, but Rees was there first and claimed at the second attempt

before Linton blocked off a Rees clearance, with the Rebels' keeper scampering back to claim the ball before Linton could get round him.

After Dylan Morgan had seen a shot blocked from the edge of the box, Town's best opportunity of the half came just before the half hour. A superb Ollie Chamberlain pass released Morgan down the middle, and he found Zac Smith on the left side of the box who took the ball in his stride well but saw his effort deflect for a corner. The set piece from Foulston was punched clear by Rees and landed for Joe Guest 18 yards out. However his first-time volley missed the target.

Further Town pressure saw Linton get goalside of Rees, but Odei Martin Sorondo blocked the shot before Worthing put two attempts to their name leading up to the break, Joan Luque firing wide at the far post from a Joe Felix cross and then Luque broke to find Ricky Aguiar who eyed glory with a chip from distance over the top. The half ended in stalemate though with the Peacocks having the clearer openings in a pretty subdued affair.

The contest continued in a similar fashion after the interval as the sun went down and the temperature dropped. A Rebels' defender did well to intercept Morgan's

floated cross as Chamberlain shaped to pull the trigger while a low strike from Luque proved a routine gather for Town keeper Dan Lavercombe who was also rarely troubled throughout the 90 minutes. Both sides made a double swop just past the hour, with the hosts introducing McCootie and Ross Stearn in place of Nat Jarvis and Linton. Lucas drilled a left-footer over the bar as his side continued to probe before Worthing grabbed a goal out of the blue with twenty minutes remaining. A break down the right saw Kane Wills find Pearce at the near post and when his close range effort deflected for a corner, Wills sent it in to the near post where Luer's glanced header looped over all and sundry to find the far corner of Lavercombe's net.

Town shook off this unexpected jolt as they resumed their offensive, but their assaults on the visitor's goal were found wanting. Foulston fired a wayward volley over after a loose clearance and a Lucas jaunt through the middle set up Smith whose shot lacked venom and was easily held by Rees. The Peacocks were unlucky though when a Lucas corner went deep for McCootie, and his header had goal written all over it until Pearce intervened well to nod clear before it crossed the line.

The game appeared to be drifting away from the Peacocks who escaped in the last five minutes when Aguiar fired a free kick from range narrowly wide. The relief was almost palpable then when Morgan collected a headed clearance to take a touch inside and pick out the top corner of Rees' net with a strike from the edge of the box. Granted his shot took a pronounced deflection off a defender, leaving Rees rooted to his spot but sometimes you need a bit of luck to end a goal drought 😊

Five minutes of added time were not

enough for Town to carve out a winner as referee Read brought the game to a conclusion with the hosts on the attack. A fracas then developed in the middle of the pitch, leading to a red card for Worthing's Michael Klass and Town's Rob Dray while Jarvis also received a second yellow outside the changing rooms. This incident seemed at odds with what had gone before, with the game being played in a fair-minded spirit. The Peacocks can now look forward to tackling a nine game programme during December buoyed by a well-deserved point and finally getting the Goals For column reactivated.





VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH 2023-24 LEAGUE STANDINGS

P	Team	GP	W	D	L	F	A	+/-	PTS
1	Yeovil Town	20	14	3	3	40	24	+16	45
2	Maidstone United	21	11	6	4	32	23	+9	39
3	Hampton & Richmond	21	11	5	5	34	27	+7	38
4	Torquay United	21	12	1	8	38	31	+7	37
5	Aveley	22	10	5	7	34	27	+7	35
6	Bath City	21	9	6	6	39	28	+11	33
7	Worthing	20	10	3	7	35	30	+5	33
8	Chelmsford City	21	8	8	5	29	23	+6	32
9	Braintree Town	21	8	7	6	34	23	+11	31
10	Tonbridge Angels	22	8	6	8	31	30	+1	30
11	WESTON-SUPER-MARE	20	9	3	8	30	31	-1	30
12	FARNBOROUGH	21	7	8	6	37	34	+3	29
13	Dartford	20	8	4	8	33	27	+6	28
14	Chippenham Town	21	7	7	7	31	31	0	28
15	Hemel Hempstead Town	20	7	7	6	23	24	-1	28
16	TAUNTON TOWN	17	6	7	4	21	21	0	25
17	St Albans City	20	8	1	11	26	32	-6	25
18	Weymouth	21	5	8	8	23	31	-8	23
19	Slough Town	18	6	4	8	33	31	+2	22
20	Truro City	19	6	4	9	27	30	-3	22
21	Welling United	21	4	8	9	28	40	-12	20
22	Eastbourne Borough	22	5	5	12	27	41	-14	20
23	Dover Athletic	21	1	9	11	22	40	-18	12
24	Havant & Waterlooville	21	2	3	16	23	51	-28	9

- P - Position GP - Games Played W - Won L - Lost D - Drawn F - For A - Against PTS - Points -

TODAY'S FIXTURES

Saturday 9th December 2023

3pm	Dartford v Yeovil Town
3pm	Taunton Town v Farnborough
3pm	Truro City v Dover Athletic
3pm	Worthing v St Albans City

UPCOMING FIXTURES

Tuesday 12th December 2023

7.45pm	Taunton Town v Weston-super-Mare
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Wednesday 13th December 2023

7.45pm	Havant & Waterlooville v Hemel Hempstead
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Saturday 16th December 2023

3pm	Braintree Town v Aveley
3pm	Chippenham Town v Weymouth
3pm	Dover Athletic v Bath City
3pm	Havant & Waterlooville v Taunton Town
3pm	Slough Town v Farnborough
3pm	St Albans City v Chelmsford City
3pm	Tonbridge Angels v Dartford
3pm	Torquay United v Hemel Hempstead Town
3pm	Welling United v Eastbourne Borough
3pm	Weston-super-Mare v Truro City
3pm	Worthing v Maidstone United
3pm	Yeovil Town v Hampton & Richmond Borough



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The Untold Game

Vasco versus Racism and Rice Powder

Vasco da Gama are one of the more successful clubs in Brazil. In a country with no long-term dominant force, their four league titles is bettered by just four teams, and just one from the Rio do Janeiro region (Flamengo). The club that gave us Romario and the excellently named Roberto Dinamite is a fixture on the Brazilian and continental stage, winning the Copa Libertadores in 1998 and, despite some recent struggles, consistently competing at the summit of Brazilian football. But their proudest moment wasn't any of their league titles. It wasn't even their South American dominance. It was when they were kicked out of the league.

Football was a game for the elites in Brazil. It came to the country late, two decades later than it had in neighbouring Argentina and Uruguay, and reflected some of the worst attitudes of Brazilian society. They had been the last nation on the continent to abolish slavery, and carried the racism of those days into the sport, where white players were expected.

The problem for Brazilian society was that some black and dual-heritage players were simply too good to ignore. Arthur Friedenreich, son of a black Brazilian mother and German father, was included in the team for England's first ever match, against a touring Exeter City side. His contemporary, Carlos Alberto, forced his

way into the Fluminense team that had won five of the first seven regional championships. But while Friedenreich played in his own skin, Fluminense would very literally have preferred Alberto to play out of his. They whitened his face with rice powder, and when he sweated it off and the ruse became clear, it gave Fluminense their dark, derogatory nickname: rice powder.

Vasco da Gama were a sailing club for the first decade and a half of organised football around Rio de Janeiro, fitting for a club named after the famous Portuguese explorer. They allowed members of any colour, but football has always been a booming business in Brazil and in 1921 the sailing club added football to its list of activities, and joined the Campeonato Carioca. Not without comment.

Despite the reservations of the region's other clubs, including Fluminense, Vasco continued to accept and play black players. Rio's clubs initially held their noses and allowed their new member to compete in the 14 team league, while Vasco became increasingly proud of their stand against the racism of their opponents. And then, disaster struck, at least for 12 of other clubs in the Campeonato.

Having finished the previous season 8th out of 8 in the Campeonato's Serie A,

Vasco improved. And then continued to improve. The 1923 competition was, to use a phrase, a whitewash. Vasco lost just one game on the way to their first trophy, winning the league by six points - the highest margin for five years - and causing chaos among the regions clubs.

Twelve of their opponents immediately withdrew from the league in protest at the regional football association's allowances of non-white players. They broke away to form their own league, with rules they controlled, and most importantly with their own racial criteria. Vasco, as reigning champions, were invited to join, on the understanding that they would fulfil those racial criteria. Vasco, to their credit, refused. Villa Isabel followed their lead.

The 1924 season was farcical. The original league was flooded with clubs from the region, presumably to try to recreate the competitiveness that had come before. Vasco dominated once more, against teams that had previously been in Serie B, or not even included in the league the previous season. The breakaway league contained the biggest names in Rio de

Janeiro's footballing landscape - Botafogo, Flamengo, and of course Fluminense - and was far more competitive. But tainted, even as it progressed, by the absence of the champions. It was won, almost as a direct challenge to Vasco's ideals, by Rice Powder themselves, Fluminense.

Vasco issued a statement saying they would not sacrifice the twelve non-white players who had helped them to win their first trophy, and would continue to play competitive (or uncompetitive) football to the values they had always held. They won the public relations battle, being seen as the future of Brazilian football, and the breakaway clubs eventually folded. Vasco were admitted for the 1925 season.

They lost their title in a close fought campaign to Flamengo, but they had already won the real battle. They forced the door open a little bit wider for non-white players, and without their stand against racism who can say what talent might have been lost to the game. All the titles in the world can't add up to the impact of actually changing the sport.





2023-24 FIXTURES & RESULTS

Date	Competition	Opponents	KO/Score	Att	Lge Pos
AUGUST					
Sat 5th	League	BRAINTREE TOWN (H)	2-1 W	801	4th
Sat 12th	League	Aveley (A)	4-1 L	372	15th
Tues 15th	League	Weymouth (A)	1-1 D	1,252	14th
Sat 19th	League	WELLING UNITED (H)	1-0 W	727	9th
Sat 26th	League	ST ALBANS CITY (H)	3-2 W	642	5th
Mon 28th	League	Maidstone United (A)	1-1 D	2,014	6th
SEPTEMBER					
Sat 2nd	League	DARTFORD (H)	1-0 W	902	5th
Tues 5th	League	Chippenham Town (A)	3-3 D	634	6th
Sat 9th	League	Tonbridge Angels (A)	0-3 W	852	5th
Fri 15th	FAC 2Q	Merthyr Town (A)	1-1 D	1,583	N/A
Tue 19th	FAC 2QR	MERTHYR TOWN (H)	1-2 L	774	N/A
Sat 23rd	League	HAVANT & WATERLOOVILLE (H)	0-0 D	877	4th
Sat 30th	League	EASTBOURNE BOROUGH (H)	2-1 W	670	3rd
OCTOBER					
Tue 3rd	SPC1	PORTISHEAD TOWN (H)	5-2 W	273	N/A
Sat 7th	League	Dover Athletic (A)	2-2 D	617	2nd
Sat 21st	League	HAMPTON & RICHMOND (H)	0-1 L	843	3rd
Tues 24th	League	Bath City (A)	3-0 L	1,537	5th
Sat 28th	League	Chelmsford City (A)	0-0 D	645	5th
NOVEMBER					
Sat 4th	League	FARNBOROUGH (H)	P-P	N/A	11th
Tues 7th	SPC2	STREET (H)	2-2 (4-3W Pens)	298	N/A
Sat 11th	League	Hemel Hempstead Town (A)	1-0 L	491	13th
Tues 14th	League	Truro City (A)	P-P	-	15th
Tues 21st	FAT2	Welling United (A)	2-2 (8-7L Pens)	258	15th
Sat 25th	League	WORTHING (H)	1-1 D	765	15th

Date	Competition	Opponents	KO/Score	Att	Lge Pos
DECEMBER					
Sat 2nd	League	Eastbourne Borough (A)	A-A	N/A	15th
Tue 5th	League	SLOUGH TOWN (H)	P-P	-	-
Sat 9th	League	FARNBOROUGH (H)	3:00pm	-	-
Tue 12th	League	WESTON-SUPER-MARE (H)	7:45pm	-	-
Sat 16th	League	Havant & Waterlooville (A)	3:00pm	-	-
Tue 19th	League	TORQUAY UNITED (H)	7:45pm	-	-
Sat 23rd	League	TONBRIDGE ANGELS (H)	3:00pm	-	-
Tues 26th	League	Yeovil Town (A)	3:00pm	-	-
JANUARY					
Tues 1st	League	YEOVIL TOWN (H)	3:00pm	-	-
Sat 6th	League	Slough Town (A)	3:00pm	-	-
Sat 13th	League	DOVER ATHLETIC (H)	3:00pm	-	-
Sat 20th	League	Braintree Town (A)	3:00pm	-	-
Tues 23rd	League	WEYMOUTH (H)	7:45pm	-	-
Sat 27th	League	AVELEY (H)	3:00pm	-	-
FEBRUARY					
Sat 3rd	League	Welling United (A)	3:00pm	-	-
Sat 10th	League	St Albans City (A)	3:00pm	-	-
Sat 17th	League	MAIDSTONE UNITED (H)	3:00pm	-	-
Tues 20th	League	CHIPPENHAM TOWN (H)	7:45pm	-	-
Sat 24th	League	Dartford (A)	3:00pm	-	-
MARCH					
Sat 2nd	League	TRURO CITY (H)	3:00pm	-	-
Sat 9th	League	Worthing (A)	3:00pm	-	-
Tues 12th	League	Torquay United (A)	7:45pm	-	-
Sat 16th	League	EASTBOURNE BOROUGH (H)	3:00pm	-	-
Sat 23rd	League	CHELMSFORD CITY (H)	3:00pm	-	-
Fri 29th	League	Weston-Super-Mare (A)	3:00pm	-	-
APRIL					
Mon 1st	League	BATH CITY (H)	3:00pm	-	-
Sat 6th	League	Hampton & Richmond (A)	3:00pm	-	-
Sat 13th	League	Farnborough (A)	3:00pm	-	-
Sat 20th	League	HEMEL HEMPSTEAD TOWN (H)	3:00pm	-	-

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